Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

Vol. VIII.—No. 27. BOSTON, MASS., SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1891. Whole No. 209.

"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."

JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

Hugh Price Hughes says that "Sanctification is an intense desire not to have your own way." If this definition is correct, it is very easy to understand why no one has been able to find a genuine sanctificationist.

Common sense from judges on the subject of boycotting, blackmailing, and extortion is so rare that I am glad to note the decision recently rendered by the New York Supreme Court, in which the position was taken that it is not unlawful for a delegate of workmen to demand money from an employer and threaten him that, if the money was not paid, the workmen in his employ would stop work. The judges held that it was not unlawful for the workmen to leave or for the leader to advise them to leave.

The "Sun" does not like the excise laws of New York, and thinks that "it is only right that it should be an expensive luxury to enforce a sumptuary law that makes a crime of conduct not criminal in itself, and that makes criminals of honest people." Does the "Sun" forget that most of our statutes make crimes of conduct not criminal in itself? The enforcement of all these statutes *is* an expensive luxury. To enjoy this luxury, people go without bread. Yet the "Sun," which pretends to admire simplicity, economy, and moderation, neglects to remonstrate with the reckless citizens and to teach them the beauty of economy in legislation.

Speaking of the people who denounce every utterance in which an assumption of the eternal validity of the recognized virtues is not implicit, Mr. G. Bernard Shaw, in his "Quintessence of Ibsenism," says that "all progress involves the beating of them from that position." Mr. Shaw is of course right, and it is easy to cite a thousand convincing illustrations of the truth of this proposition. But Mr. Shaw, very unfortunately, "rakes up" the case of Proudhon, "who nearly half a century ago denounced 'property' as theft." Mr. Shaw does not take the trouble of reproducing Proudhon's distinctions and definitions, and most readers will simply find in his words a confirmation of the notion that Proudhon was a Communist and really opposed private property.

Because the "Popular Science Monthly" has printed an article on "Eight Hours" which contains some platitudes and not a little nonsense, the "Journal of the Knights of Labor" says that the former magazine, while it may be an authority on archæology, evidently knows very little of sociology. Magazine editors are not responsible for opinions advanced by contributors; but the absurdity of the "Journal's" remark is greater than may be inferred from this simple fact. It is well known that the editor of the "Popular Science Monthly" is a disciple of Spencer, and that his sociology is the same as Spencer's. Is our Knight of Labor prepared to labor with Spencer and enlighten him on sociological matters?

The New York "Times" refers contemptuously to the "cranks" who "talk rubbish about 'making the volume of currency equal to the wants of trade,'" and denies that there is any evidence that a single commercial transaction has failed to be consummated in this country for the last twenty years for want of the currency with which to make the exchange. No, commercial transactions do not fail to be consummated, but business men are driven out of business and into bankruptcy, while many are kept out of business, by the ruinous rate of interest which is the result of the monopoly of the currency. Lately I quoted in these columns an editorial paragraph from the "Times," in which the fact was commended to the attention of the "money cranks" that by a simple arrangement between the banks $44 did the work of $1,000. Would we be just as well off if the Clearing House institution were prohibited by law? If not, then what evidence has the "Times" that this institution leaves no want *unsatisfied*? We do not expect the "Times" to favor the abolition of the money monopoly, but we expect it to try to be consistent. The enthusiasm over the "tremendous work" of the Clearing Houses, and the contempt for the "money cranks," do not admit of being explained by the same theory.

What is the matter with the Nationalists? They seem to be trying to prejudice the public against State Socialists and to be determined to make out a difference between the two movements at the expense of truth. In a recent issue I referred to a paragraph in the "New Nation" bearing on this subject, and now I read in a report of a lecture on "Socialism and Nationalism" delivered the other day by Mason A. Greene, managing editor of the "New Nation," that "the lecturer went into the phases of the two organizations and their fundamental differences,—the one claiming for a complete substitution of public control and ownership for private and competitive enterprises; the other hoping for similar results, but by slower and more lasting methods, sharing in burdens and profits, and making for a pure economic democracy." As the report appeared in a paper friendly to Nationalism, there is no reason to doubt its accuracy. Now, even admitting the allegation as to difference in methods, such difference cannot be called "fundamental." But no such difference exists, and the Nationalists know it. The German Socialists have just adopted a new platform, and so "slow" are their methods that the whole world of capital is gratified at their moderation, while the Socialists of this country, almost without exception, believe in political methods. Again I ask: What is the matter with the Nationalists?

In an article on "Prohibition and Labor" contributed by a prohibitionist to the "Arena," I find the following interesting facts, which may be here reproduced without comment: "In the cabinet of the first president of the republic, Thomas Jefferson was Secretary of State, and Alexander Hamilton was Secretary of the Treasury. To each of them Washington submitted the question whether Congress had power to incorporate a bank. Jefferson, believing popular liberty safe only in a strict construction of the constitution, denied the power to create a bank, because no such power is expressed, or is strictly necessary to the exercise of any power expressly granted. Hamilton, believing that a liberal construction of the constitution was essential to the development of America, answered that Congress had the power, that the power was incidental to the national character of the government. He construed the grant of 'necessary' powers in these words: 'It is a common mode of expression to say that it was necessary for a government or person to do this or that thing, when nothing more is intended or understood than that interests of the government or person require or may be promoted by doing this or that thing. The imagination can be at no loss for exemplifications on the use of the word in this sense. And it is the true one, in which it is to be understood as used in the constitution.' The Supreme Court, quoting these very words with approval, has adopted Hamilton's construction."

I have never said that Mr. Pentecost's ideal of society, in which there shall be no armies or prisons, is the sheerest moonshine and Utopia. As I have never *said* so, it is difficult for me to understand how Mr. Pentecost can declare, as he does in the "Twentieth Century," that I *think* so, except on the supposition that there are times when Mr. Pentecost is incapable of reading the English language. What I have said is this: "So long as Mr. Pentecost is willing to let the criminal ride roughshod over him and me, his 'preference not to be ruled at all' is nothing but a beatific revelling in sheerest moonshine and Utopia." Now it is obvious that these words do not characterize as Utopian the mere "preference not to be ruled at all" in the sense of a wish that there were no criminals or invasive persons desiring and trying to rule. So far from deeming it Utopian to dream of such a condition, I think that progress has been and is, in the long run, toward such a condition, and I have repeatedly said so in these columns. What I characterized as moonshine and Utopia was the "preference not to be ruled at all" in the sense of non-resistance to criminal rule put forward as a maxim of present political conduct while criminals still exist. This is the sense in which Mr. Pentecost must have used the phrase, because he directed it against a paragraph written to justify resistance to criminals and containing nothing to warrant the implication now put upon my words that I desire the continued existence of criminals. The fact is that my answer to Mr. Pentecost has made it impossible for him to defend his attitude of non-resistance to criminals, seeing which he coolly assumes that he took no such position, but merely intended to express a wish that the time may come when criminals shall be no more. The trick is scarcely in keeping with the candor which Mr. Pentecost at times exhibits. I am loath to relinquish my hope that this virtue is less spasmodic than his opinions.

How Government-Restriction Works.

[Today.]

We have it on the authority of a press despatch that the Kansas Superintendent of Insurance has announced that he will either compel Insurance companies doing business in Kansas to appoint agents in that State or else refuse them licenses. In other words, the superintendent feels called upon to announce that he will *hereafter* enforce the law! This is a very pretty commentary on the way State superintendence works. If the regulation clashes with the interests of the rich and industrially powerful, the officers charged with the execution of the law are always announcing that they are just about to begin. They remind one of the exploits of Mr. Winkle and Mr. Snodgrass. Like the latter, "in a truly Christian spirit, and in order that they may take no one unawares, they announce in a very loud tone that they are going to begin, and proceed at once to take off their coats with the utmost deliberation," and, like the former, they forthwith make a terrific onslaught on a small boy. The established companies are safe enough; but just let a small concern show its head in Kansas without a license, and see how quick the superintendent will fall on it tooth and nail. Is it so very wonderful, after all, that companies already successfully engaged welcome governmental regulation?

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Issued Weekly at One Dollar a Year; Single Copies Three Cents.

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Office of Publication, 224 Tremont Street.
Post Office Address: LIBERTY, P. O. Box No. 3366, Boston, Mass.

Entered as Second Class Mail Matter.

BOSTON, MASS., DECEMBEE 12, 1891.

"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the exciseman, the evening-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel." — PROUDHON.

☞ The appearance in the editorial column of articles over other signatures than the editor's initial indicates that the editor approves their central purpose and general tenor, though he does not hold himself responsible for every phrase or word. But the appearance in other parts of the paper of articles by the same or other writers by no means indicates that he disapproves them in any respect, such disposition of them being governed largely by motives of convenience.

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The Lesson of Reformers' Failures.

"The complete collapse of the Farmers' Alliance movement, after flourishing and spreading alarm for less than two years," says the New York "Nation," "contains a lesson of some value for the many public men who lose their heads in the presence of the political epidemics known as 'crazes.'" Yes, and it also contains a lesson of great value to the reformers and agitators who generally miss the moral of the defeats of the reform movements and who therefore never learn any wisdom from experience. The labor movement has no history, has never been philosophically treated and studied. The reformers learn nothing and forget nothing; they go on repeating the same blunders and yielding to the same temptations. The Farmers' Alliance has collapsed, and yet the leaders are unable and unwilling to convert the defeat into a victory by a sober and intelligent study of the causes of the disaster.

Why are reform movements short-lived? The "Nation" advances a theory of its own to explain the phenomenon. It says:

> A very brief examination of the appearance and progress of these crazes during the past twenty years shows very clearly that an attempt in the United States at a sudden and violent departure from the established political and economical traditions of the country is pretty sure to end disastrously for all concerned in it within a very brief period. There is probably no society in the world on which it is harder to make a quick impression of any sort in favor of a very radical change in the mental outlook of the people. As a rule, it takes twenty years to build up a party, and it takes just about the same length of time to drive a party definitely out of power. All originators and promoters of crazes underrate greatly the weight and bulk of the mass to be acted on and moved, before a new theory can get a firm foothold in politics. They underrate, too, the force of habit and the want of mental agility among the rural population, which really governs the United States. Syllogisms make but little impression on the farmer. He absorbs ideas after long contact with them, but they can hardly ever be injected into his head out of a reform syringe.
>
> If it be asked how it is, if all this be true, that the promoters of crazes are able to make such an appearance of progress as to produce so much confusion of mind among the political augurs, the answer is that they are usually fearfully in earnest and give themselves up wholly for a brief period to the propagation of their new idea. They have all the passion and enthusiasm which one finds so often among inventors. And then they are powerfully aided by the large class of politicians who have failed in the regular parties and are on the lookout for a job, and by the still larger class who live in expectation of some sort of cataclysm or social revolution which will make a better distribution of justice. This latter class, which includes a great many clergymen, cherish the belief that there exists somewhere a stock of pent-up indignation over what they consider the defects in the social organization, which may any day burst forth and clear the ground for something far better. Any sudden proclamation of very radical opinions or demands seems to them, therefore, a sign that the day of righteous wrath has dawned. The old dams are at last giving way. All these classes are assisted, of course, greatly in making an uproar by that portion of the press which cultivates sensations and lives on them.

According to the "Nation," then, the reform movements simply die from exhaustion and lack of nourishment. The wave of enthusiasm spends itself, while the mass preserve the original state of placidity and quietness. It is obvious, however, that, in attributing the genesis of "crazes" to the appearance of a few dreamers and enthusiasts, the "Nation" puts the cart before the horse. Indeed, it contradicts itself in doing so. If what it says about the inertia and want of mental agility among the people at large is true, then the brief period of success and growth of the Alliance or other reform parties remains unexplained. Nor does the theory explain the decline and fall of the parties *after* the period of triumph. It is difficult to move the mass; but, after it has been moved, the difficulty ought to be, not in keeping it in motion, but in bringing it to a standstill. Even the New York "Times" sees the superficiality of the "Nation's" view and is moved to suggest a more satisfactory theory. "The foundation of a craze," it opines, "is the belief of a large number of persons that, because they are dissatisfied with the condition of society, therefore the organization of society is wrong, and that they are suffering, not by reason of a law of nature or by their own fault, but because somebody has succeeded in getting the better of them." Naturally the demagogues and ambitious politicians take advantage of such a popular sentiment and propound schemes for redressing the imaginary wrongs. When the popular sentiment subsides, the demagogues disappear. In support of this theory the "Times" cites the Farmers' Alliance. "It was the farmers who were in trouble, because their crops would not pay the interest on their mortgages. In effect they advertised for some device that would get them out of this trouble. The advertisement was answered. No appeal of that kind from several hundred thousand voters is likely to go unanswered in this country." But "now the distressed farmer is no longer distressed. He has unprecedentedly large crops, which he can sell at unprecedentedly large prices. Being out of debt and contented, he leaves the cave of Adullam."

If the "Times" is satisfied with this explanation, nobody will take the trouble to disturb it in its blissful ignorance. If it can afford to make itself ridiculous, we can afford to witness the spectacle. But those who realize that large crops are but slightly more adequate than sun spots, and who know that neither the dreams of the few nor the delusions of the many are at the foundation of the reform movements, may well ask themselves why such poor results are attained at such great cost. A little reflection, I think, would lead to the conclusion that the chief factors in bringing about the defeat of reform efforts are faith in political methods and unintelligent, hap hazard platform building. A reform party must have clear and definite issues, and it must choose an expedient policy and fit methods. Only under such conditions can it grow. A party composed of miscellaneous and incompatible elements, with a platform containing miscellaneous and incongruous demands, must inevitably go to pieces after the first encounter with the well-disciplined hosts of the enemy. Our reform parties begin by compromising principles. They want quantity, not quality. They welcome everybody, the only qualification being interest in something vaguely called "reform." Platforms are made so as to conciliate and satisfy each and every faction, "harmony" being the watchword. The result is a reform crazy-quilt, and the alleged harmony simply means an agreement to sacrifice anything for the sake of presenting a solid front and producing a sensation. Such parties cannot live. Intelligent and consistent adherence to well-defined positions is the fundamental condition of the life and development of a reform party. Do our reform parties clearly know what they want? Take the Farmers' Alliance. It "demanded" a thousand and one things, without offering a single palpable and substantial peg to hang an issue on. Sensible men are not attracted by noise and unintelligible cries of "monopoly," "slavery," and "robbery." There was the sub-treasury scheme, to be sure, but few members of the party understood it, and there were none to present or defend it properly. It could not be defended, because it is hollow and absurd. Again, take the single-taxers. In order to swell their ranks they stultify themselves (at least the leaders do) by advocating government bounties, control of what they call "natural monopolies," including the postal service and the currency, which are emphatically *not* natural monopolies. They desire the coöperation of Greenbackers, protectionists, and other labor reformers, and are ready to surrender their own principles in consideration for such aid. Of course they weaken themselves by such tactics, since they lose their individuality, their distinctive features.

Faith in political methods is the more influential factor of the two, since it is this faith which begets the contempt of principle and disregard of the conditions of success of which I have spoken. It is because the party wants to cut a figure in politics immediately after its birth that the fatal course above described is taken. On the disadvantages of the political method itself I need not expatiate. With the intrigues, jealousies, double-facedness, rascality, hypocrisy, and treachery of politicians we are all familiar. Labor politicians have not given us any reasons for regarding them as exceptions to the rule.

Our reform parties need to learn and remember the old lesson, — they need to know themselves and be themselves. They must learn to wait and to be content with the success which attends natural growth. Not that I think success would certainly ensue upon their observance of the conditions referred to. Even if they should emulate the State Socialists in the matter of platform construction, success could not be confidently predicted for them. The powers that be have shown that they are well able to take care of their interests, and that restrictive legislation does not injure them as much as it does the men who procure it. The mere passage of a measure settles nothing. It is necessary to interpret the measure, to declare it constitutional, and to enforce it. Neither our legislators, our judges, nor our executive officers are known to be warmly attached to labor interests; hence no legislation really obnoxious to the beneficiaries of the present monopoly system has any chance of seeing the light of day. No reform can succeed which does not build upon the principle of liberty, and does not involve the restriction of governmental activity. To be powerful, parties must make repeal their watchword and freedom their remedy. Think of the good that might be accomplished by a body like the Farmers' Alliance with a platform declaring, not for sub-treasury schemes, but for freedom in banking! Think of the influence such a body would exert! Legislators, politicians, judges even, would be paralyzed with terror and dismay, and there would be confusion and helplessness in the councils of the monopolists. An individualistic and intelligent Farmers' or Laborers' Alliance could achieve everything, — a paternalistic and ignorant Alliance can do nothing. V. Y.

The Chalk-Line Sanction of Despotism.

Frank M. Pixley of the San Francisco "Argonaut" is very much disgusted and angered by the fact that a large number of Americans have signed a petition to the Czar praying for the cessation of the persecution of the Jews in Russia. In the first place he expresses doubts regarding the facts of the case. He assumes that we know little or nothing of the matter except what we have received through English sources. As Mr. Pixley has a very bad attack of Anglophobia, he, like Dana of the "Sun," instinctively sides with everything and everybody that Englishmen are supposed to view with disfavor. "The metropolitan press of America is largely colored by the English press, and rarely

sees the organs of Russian opinion." Will Mr. Pixley kindly inform us how much the statements of the Russian press would be worth, either to our metropolitan papers or to any other journal? A press which exists only by the sufferance of government censors and prints only what those censors approve must indeed be a source of reliable information concerning the atrocities of a half-barbarian government. But perhaps Mr. Pixley is prepared to discredit the statements of George Kennan, Sergius Stepniak, and other intelligent Americans and Russians relative to the position of the press in Russia. Perhaps he is prepared to assert that the editor in Russia wields as untrammeled a pen as does the English or the American editor. Perhaps he is prepared to swear that the government of the Czar has never persecuted the members of dissenting churches, despoiled the Jews, imprisoned and exiled tens of thousands of the most intelligent of the Russian people for the offence of agitating for a constitutional government, and deliberately and persistently prevented the establishment of a free press. Perhaps he is prepared to say directly what he does impliedly, — that is, that the only reliable "organs of Russian opinion" are the official journals of the government. It is a fair inference to suppose that Mr. Pixley would accept the statements of a pirate or a bandit in preference to those of the victims of either, especially if a few sensible and justice loving Englishmen should be so indiscreet as to espouse the cause of the despoiled and wounded unfortunates. But Mr. Pixley goes further in his reactionary utterances. Hear him:

It may be that the Czar has unjustly sentenced nihilists to exile in Siberia. It may be that the brutal Russian peasantry have given the rein to their savage instincts and have persecuted the Jews, as other races have persecuted minorities all through history. But, if so, these are matters with which we have no concern. The people of the United States have no more right to call the Emperor of Russia to account for his treatment of his subjects than the Russian people would have a right to call us to account for the treatment of the negroes in the South or the Chinese in California. For five hundred thousand Americans to arraign the Czar for the edicts which govern the internal affairs of his empire, is just as impudent as it would be for the Sultan of Turkey to denounce President Harrison for the shameful treatment of the remnant of our Indian tribes.

Substitute for "Emperor of Russia" train wrecker and for "his subjects" the passengers on a railroad train, and Mr. Pixley's assertion would be as true then as it is now — that is, wholly devoid of truth. The existence of the train wrecker is a menace to the physical integrity and life of all who travel or may travel and to the happiness of their friends, and therefore all of these are justified by the law of self interest, if by no other consideration, in attempting the seizure or death of the wrecker whenever, in their judgment, such attempt would be likely to result in a diminution of his dangerous power or in his destruction. Because he made his lair in and was terrorizing Oklahoma especially would give him no "right" in managing the "internal affairs" of his domain, as against the intervention of the people or any portion of the people of Ohio. The continued existence of a despotism like that of Russia is a menace to the liberty and life of every inhabitant of the globe, and every inhabitant of the globe is therefore justified by the law of self-interest, if by no other consideration, in interposing between the tyrant and his slaves whenever, in his judgment, such interposition promises to result in the curtailment of the usurper's power and the amelioration of the condition of the oppressed. It is time, one would think, that men assuming to be republicans and living in a country having a government republican in form should cease to assume the sacredness of the "edicts" of an absolute ruler like Alexander of Russia, and should refrain from impudently sneering at earnest men and women who express their doubts of this monarch's assumed right to rob, imprison, torture, exile, and murder the "subjects" of "his" empire. How came the Russian empire to be "his," Mr. Pixley?

When the "Argonaut" declares that we have no more right to call the Russian despot to account for his inhumanities to the nihilists and Jews than the Russian people would have to take us to task for the treatment of the negroes in the South and the Chinese in California, it touches fire. Whatever may be the truth regarding the present relations of the blacks and the whites in the South, there unquestionably was an era in our existence as a nation when a sufficiently powerful intervention by the people of Europe in our "internal affairs" would have been a salutary lesson for slave-drivers the world over. It would be highly gratifying to all friends of justice and conducive to the best interests of good men and women everywhere if there existed in the United States or out of it a power able and willing to seize by the neck and heels and pitch into the Pacific every maimer and murderer of inoffensive Chinese on the Coast. If criminal Californians have not the desire to respect the law of equal freedom in the case of the Chinese, there *should* exist a power somewhere capable of compelling them to respect it, and for the same reasons and with the same sanctions that Mr. Pixley would regard as sufficient in the case of other thieves and murderers. And what is true concerning the Chinese in California and other portions of the Pacific Slope is equally true as regards the Jews and other persecuted people in Russia. Sensible men and women are not in the least concerned with the boundary lines of nations. It is simply a question of what *can* be done to decrease the sum total of the mischief wrought by tyrants and to extend the beneficent sway of liberty. It might be foolish or even suicidal for a dwarf to interfere with or to criticise the cruelties of a giant, however much those cruelties might pain or threaten him, but the United States and England are not dwarfs, and it is perfectly legitimate for their people and governments to say and do whatever seems to them calculated to mitigate the horrors of the Czardom. It is merely a question of expediency in the choice of means. Mr. Pixley only makes himself an object of ridicule in the eyes of common-sense people when he indulges in this balderdash about meddling with the Czar in the government of "his empire." The editor of the "Argonaut" might as well claim that a San Francisco ruffian has an absolute right to do as he pleases with his own family; that his management of its "internal affairs" is no concern of outsiders; that he may issue such "edicts" as he chooses, and if he finds it conducive to his pleasure to whip his child to death or imprison his wife for life in a dark and filthy cellar the neighbors have no business to "meddle" with his amusements. The child is "his" child and the woman is "his" wife, forsooth, and in a much more intimate and personal sense than the Russian people are the Czar's "subjects," and has not Mr. Pixley solemnly assured us that the St. Petersburg ruffian, the Great White Father, may do as he wills with "his" empire? Why, then, may not the San Francisco ruffian do as he wills with "his" family? Is he not its Father and Head?

Mr. Pixley doubts the statements of correspondents concerning Russian tyrannies and says that "It is hard to reconcile them with the general loyalty of the Russian people to their government." Certainly the brains, heart, and hope of the Russian people, the educated classes (exclusive of a part only of officialdom), are not in thought loyal to the government, however subservient a large majority of them are forced to be in speech and act. But what about the great bulk of the people, the peasantry? Are they not generally conceded to be ignorant and superstitious to a degree? Even Mr. Pixley speaks of them as the "brutal Russian peasantry." It is their ignorance and superstition that is the support of the Romanoffs, and one of the most unforgiveable offences of the students and the nihilists is the attempt to introduce among these people the teachings of modern science and the principles of so-called free government, meaning the government of universal suffrage.

E. C. WALKER.

Plumb-Line Pointers.

I am not a reformer. This I have again and again said in these columns. I am not trying to reform anybody or anything. To do so would be impertinent, useless, and absurd. It is my highest desire that people should live as they please. I merely express certain opinions because it is a pleasure to do so. If those opinions are of use to any one I am glad, but I am not trying to influence any one by them. I dislike reformers, and seriously object to being called or supposed to be one. Reformers are a bore, a nuisance. — *Hugh O. Pentecost.*

I express certain opinions not only because it is a pleasure to do so, but because I am trying to reform several persons and several things. I may not succeed to any extent in my endeavors, but I think that if I could do so my surroundings would be much more agreeable to me. This would increase my happiness both directly and indirectly. Directly, by giving me better rewards for my labor, associations less limited and directed by others, and the placidity of mind which plenty and liberty bring in their train. Indirectly, by affording me the mental and emotional enjoyment which I find in contemplating the sane, free, and painless actions of my fellows. Therefore I am a reformer and am studying modes of expression and principles of action that I may exert all the influence possible by my utterances and acts. I do not deem this either impertinent, useless, or absurd. With the element of invasive force eliminated, I see nothing to dislike in any reformers, as reformers. I wish to remark, further, that in my opinion there would be no Hugh O. Pentecost (I speak of the mental, not of the physical man) and no "Twentieth Century" for him to edit if there had been no reformers in the world.

The first paragraph below is from the "Credit Foncier" of Sinaloa; the second is a declaration by A. K. Owen, originator of the Topolobampo enterprise:

We believe in the doctrine that God is love; in forgiveness of injuries; in good deeds; in fraternal love and kindness to all; but we make no special professions, and by our fundamental laws can never have any temples raised to any particular religion, nor can we suffer any paid preachers. We are bound to allow every one to interpret all inspirational or religious books for himself and to cherish whatever conceptions of the "unknowable" he must. We respect the religious aspirations of all, but firmly maintain that religion is a matter between God and one's own soul: that if one would pray, he should enter into his closet and, "when he has shut the door, pray to the Father who seeth in secret," etc.; in other words, that we must not force our beliefs and opinions upon others, but respect each other's rights of all kinds. Of course, with our doors open so wide, some will come in who are not sufficiently tolerant of the opinions of others; but we trust the great majority will understand our principles. That will make us charitable to all.

Pacific City is the first community ever presented with fixed rules to guarantee religious liberty and at the same time to encourage and protect the one man or the one woman who wished to give expression to his or her certain views, or to practise his or her peculiar rites.

There seem to be several authoritarian mice in the Sinaloa meal sack. What becomes of the expressions of religious toleration in the face of the express stipulation in the "fundamental laws" that there shall be no churches erected or paid preachers permitted in the colony? What about the practice of the "peculiar rites" of the individual? Suppose these include worship in a church building? Who will give a definite answer?

The crying need of our day in State as in Church is for men who will call no man master; who will follow their leader only when their leader goes right; who will carry a conscience wrapped up in their ballot to the polling place; who will vote with an eye upturned to God. — *Heber Newton.*

But it is to be noted that men who have "an eye upturned to God" are the very ones who are most prone to call some other man "master." In other words, he who worships God is worshipping an enlarged man, and hence becomes easily the dupe and tool of men of superior strength and cunning. And of all voters who are undesirable and dangerous is this man whom Heber Newton sighs for, the godly man who carries "a conscience wrapped up in" his ballot. The religious conscience has in all ages been the enemy of liberty and the torturer of the weak. It is now sometimes called the "moral" conscience, but the change of name has not altered its character.

E. C. WALKER.

ON A CERTAIN WOULD-BE HUMORIST.

There was a man named Lespinasse,
Who made an attempt at a farce,
But his ponderous jokes
A laugh couldn't coax;
He wrote himself down as an ass.

Competition and War.

[The Nation.]

Mr. Aldace F. Walker, Chairman of the Western Traffic Association, has an article in the December "Forum" under the title "Unregulated Competition Self-Destructive." He begins by arraigning as an unfounded and injurious maxim the phrase "Competition is the life of trade." Where this maxim had its origin, he is unable to tell, although he has called the Librarian of Congress to aid him in his researches. Not being able to ascertain its paternity, he thinks that it got into general use by some accident, and that the phrase "Competition is the death of trade" is just as true and just as much entitled to consideration. The danger of adopting catch-words without investigating their meaning is strongly presented to us.

Having thus put us on our guard, Mr. Walker enters upon the discussion of the important subject in hand with the emphatic declaration of his own that "competition is war." The reader will be apt to ask whether the learned gentleman has not fallen into the same pit as the unknown author of the phrase "Competition is the life of trade." What is war? It consists in the employment of force, and is usually attended with the killing of men and the bombarding of towns. What is competition? It consists in the employment of persuasion. Its name implies that two or more persons are seeking by peaceable means to obtain the same things, usually goods. In short, war and competition are diametrically opposed to each other in their nature. Are their effects the same? It would be very surprising if two things which are totally unlike in their nature should lead to the same results.

Mr. Walker gives a rapid sketch of the ancient laws against engrossing, forestalling, and regrating, and of their abandonment, or rather their disuse, as competition assumed its place in modern industrial life. Competition, he thinks, has now had its day. "It seems probable," he says, "that, if Adam Smith were to come to life again today, he would be quite surprised at some results of theories which he took a prominent part in formulating." Why? Because he would discover that laborers now combine in trade unions to increase wages and shorten hours, that manufacturers form Trusts and combines to keep up the prices of goods, that lawyers agree on certain minimum fees, and doctors agree not to solicit business by advertisement; that coal exchanges fix the price of fuel for the season, and that even farmers unite to hold back their crops from market in order to keep up the price of the same.

We doubt whether Adam Smith would be surprised at these things if he could come back among us. We doubt this because the same thing existed in his day and before. In Book I. of the "Wealth of Nations" he wrote as follows:

> We rarely hear, it has been said, of the combination of masters; though frequently of those of workmen. But whoever imagines, upon this account, that masters rarely combine is as ignorant of the world as of the subject, etc.

We have introduced this brief sentence to show that the condition in which Mr. Walker finds the industrial world is not, as he seems to imagine, a new one. The Trust is new in form, but not in fact. The essential feature of combination is as old as the Guilds, if not as old as the hills.

"The fundamental fact which lies at the root of the matter," says Mr. Walker, "is this: that unrestricted competition as an economic principle is too destructive to be permitted to exist; *it has been pushed away from every industrial calling.*" We do not see that exactly. We can testify that it has not been pushed away from the newspaper business. But if it has been pushed away from every industrial calling, what is the use of writing an article to push it away further? "Competition," he continues, "is like steam and electricity, the two great mechanic agencies of these latter days, which are useful almost beyond conception when subjugated and restrained, but which scatter destruction and death when uncontrolled." Here we have the idea again that competition is war. It scatters destruction and death. Who is killed by it? Well, nobody has been exactly killed, but John Doe has failed. He was making flour or sugar or wooden nutmegs, and he could not make them as cheaply as some other people. So he was obliged to stop. How much better it would have been if he and all the other Does and Roes had combined and established a price at which the most slovenly and wasteful of them could make a fair profit! And what is a fair profit? Where is the tribunal to decide the question? Unrestricted competition has made that estimate for us hitherto, and we think it will continue to do so in most cases for a long time to come, although Commissioner Walker confidently tells us that "it has been pushed away from every industrial calling." In the few cases where it has been actually pushed away, a few persons are making unjust gains at the expense of the great mass of their fellows.

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